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Sen. Toy: Simple precautions can protect against West Nile Virus

LANSING – State Sen. Laura Toy, R-Livonia, urges people to take precautions against contracting West Nile Virus after a 65-year old Livonia man was diagnosed Aug. 24 with the sometimes-fatal virus. His is the second confirmed case of a person diagnosed with the West Nile Virus in Michigan.

“The threat West Nile Virus poses should be taken seriously, but it should not keep people from enjoying the outdoor activities that make summer special,” Toy said. “By taking a few simple steps, everyone can enjoy the outdoors without putting themselves at risk.”

Toy says people can take steps to minimize the risk of contracting West Nile Virus, including:

- Maintain window and door screening to keep mosquitoes out of buildings;
- Drain puddles in the yard and empty water from mosquito breeding sites such as buckets, troughs, barrels, cans and old tires;
- Avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk, when mosquitoes are most active; and
- Wear light-colored, long-sleeve shirts and long pants when outdoors.

“My office also is offering helpful informational flyers on the West Nile Virus,” Toy said.

Interested parties should call Toy’s office at (517) 373-1707.

Although human cases in Michigan this year have been rare, 193 birds in 56 counties have tested positive for the virus. West Nile is spread by mosquitoes and is most commonly found in birds. Infants, people older than 55, and those with suppressed immune systems are generally the most vulnerable to the virus.

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